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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0129
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000869

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/11/2017

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SUBJECT: IRAQI POLICE SERVICE CAUSES DELAYS TO PROVINCIAL
TRANSFER OF CONTROL

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Daniel V. Speckhard for reasons 1.4 (a), (b), and (d).

1.(C/REL MNF-I) Summary: On March 9, National Security Advisor Dr. Mowaffak al-Rubaie called a meeting of the principals of the Joint Committee for the Transfer of Security Responsibility (JCTSR) to discuss impediments to accelerating the transfer of provinces to Iraqi civilian control, with Iraqi participants focusing on the readiness of the police service as the major obstacle. Rubaie said he and the Prime Minister were concerned that the schedule to PIC provinces was slipping and that the coalition was not living up to the agreement the PM and President Bush made in Amman in November. As it played out, however, systemic Iraqi problems, such as poor accounting for weapons, unclear staffing levels for police, and lack of central MOI control over the provinces were disclosed as the root causes of the delay in the PIC schedule, and the US and coalition were largely spared from the disdain of the Iraqi participants. The Minister of Interior Jawad Bolani said the police system is troubled by equipment shortages, employment imbalances, and leadership and loyalty problems. Bolani committed to working with members of the JCTSR to overcome these obstacles. End Summary.

2. (C/REL MNF-I) As the director of the Iraqi agency charged with managing the JCTSR process, Dr. Rubaie hosted a meeting to discuss the delay in transferring provincial security to Iraqi control. The JCTSR principals in attendance included Minister of Interior Jawad Bolani, Minister of Defense Abdul Qader, DCM Speckhard, UK Ambassador David Asquith and MNF-I Lieutenant General Graeme Lamb. Other participants included NSA Deputy Directors Dr. Safi al-Safaa and Mr. Hamza al-Jaburi and MNF-I Major Generals' Kurt Cichowski and David Fastabend. Rubaie called the meeting to lament what he believed was a failure of the coalition to live up to the November Amman agreement between the PM and POTUS to seek an acceleration of the PIC process.

Equipment Shortages

3. (C/REL MNF-I) Bolani said equipment shortages are delaying provincial transfer. He said the Iraqi police are not fully equipped and therefore not able to sufficiently maintain law and order and counter existing threats. To illustrate this point, he recalled the autumn uprising in Al Amarah where the Iraqi army had to move in and secure the city because the police ran out of ammunition, had too few heavy weapons, and lost most of its vehicles in the battle. Abdul Qader reminded Bolani that his ministry plans to give the MOI several hundred used rifles once the Iraqi army receives its new purchase of pistols. Abdul Qader also agreed to look into providing MOI with some of the weapons the army captures

in military operations.

¶4. (C/REL MNF-I) Dr. Safaa cautioned that any additional equipment for the Iraqi police would need to be funded by the MOI as MNF-I has nearly completed its equipment contribution to the police. (NOTE: All MNF-I deliveries for the police service will be concluded by end of June 2007 and were based on the 2004 US-Iraq agreement on authorized police numbers for each province. END NOTE.) Dr. Safaa added that in several provinces, MNF-I has fielded much more equipment than it originally committed to. For example, Maysan police have received over 200% of the originally promised patrol vehicles, vehicle radios, body armor, kevlar helmets, and over 100% of rifles and base station radios. Dr. Safaa pointed out that the equipment shortage was due to the thousands of additional police that have been employed above the originally authorized number established and agreed to by the MOI and MNF-I in 2004.

EMPLOYMENT IMBALANCES

¶5. (C/REL MNF-I) Dr. Rubaie asked Bolani to explain why most provinces have hired more police than originally authorized by the central MOI in 2004. Bolani indicated many of the additional police were hired before his time and were never authorized by the central government. Bolani defended some of the over-authorization levels as necessary, saying the originally established numbers established by MOI and MNF-I failed to consider each province's unique circumstances.

¶6. (C/REL MNF-I) Bolani said because of employment related issues, his ministry had recently held a human resource conference where participants reviewed each province's

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security needs and developed modified employment levels for each provincial police service. He said his ministry will train and equip based on these rationalized levels. Again, Dr. Safaa noted all police hired above the 2004 authorized level would be the funding responsibility of MoI, not MNF-I. The DCM cautioned Bolani and Rubaie that not abiding by the 2004 authorized levels and purchasing more equipment would likely further delay provincial transfer.

Leadership and Loyalty Issues

¶7. (C/REL MNF-I) Bolani lamented the lack of control the central MoI has over provincial police services. He said the service suffers from poor leadership, high levels of corruption, and severe loyalty issues. He said he is working to make the Provincial Police Chiefs more accountable, citing his recent requirement to have all of them sign a loyalty oath and commit to upholding a number of principles. UK Ambassador recommended Bolani actually 'test' the leaders to ascertain whether they are actually living up to these standards. Bolani said he is and many are failing. Rubaie stressed to Bolani that he must support the police chiefs and their forces but must also relieve them promptly when he learns they are disloyal or corrupt. The Iraqi principals concluded that they will work closely with Bolani to develop solutions for dealing with poor and corrupt leaders and police services infiltrated with militias.

¶8. (C/REL MNF-I) Comment: The JCTSR principals meeting did not raise any new issues nor did they resolve any of the existing problems. However, it was refreshing to observe a discussion led by our Iraqi interlocutors led with little participation from outsiders. We were encouraged that the conversation on the police problems did not dissolve into a blame game with MNF-I taking the heat for all of MOI woes, especially in terms of equipment 'shortages.' In this meeting, the Iraqi principals agreed the number one problem with the police was leadership and allegiance and seemed to accept that any equipment shortages would need to be resolved

by the Iraqis not MNF-I. End Comment.
SPECKHARD